THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE [DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA]: (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. While the estimates of HIV infections are on the basis of surveillance reports undertaken annually by Government, the number of deaths quoted in the report are mere projections. Government, therefore, does not agree with the UNAIDS report.

(c) and (d) In order to prevent and control the spread of HIV/AIDS in India, a comprehensive Programme is currently under implementation throughout the country as a Centrally sponsored scheme. The project is being implemented with the assistance from World Bank, United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and Department for International Development (DFID) of U.K. The main components consist of:—

- Reducing the spread of HIV in groups at high risk by identification of target populations and providing peer counselling, condom promotion, treatment of sexually transmitted infections.
- Preventive intervention for the general population by Information, Education and Communication (IEC) and awareness campaign, provision of voluntary testing and counselling, safe blood transfusion services and prevention of occupational exposure.
- Providing financial assistance for opportunistic infections, home and community based care to people living with HIV/AIDS.
- Strengthening effectiveness and technical managerial, financial sustainability at National, State and Municipal levels.
- Promoting collaboration amongst public, private and voluntary sectors.

Privatisation of hospitals

†2842. DR. D. MASTHAN:
SHRI RAJIV RANJAN SINGH 'LALAN':

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are considering to hand-over Government hospitals to private-sector;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the hospitals proposed to be handed over to private sector have been identified by Government; and

(d) if so, the names of such hospitals and the names of places in the country where new hospitals are planned to be constructed during the current year?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (DR. C.P. THAKUR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Compulsory Mentioning of 'Best Before' on Packed Food Items

†2843. SHRI SWARAJ KAUSHAL: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have made it compulsory to mention 'best before' on all the packed food items to inform the consumers about the best for use before a particular date;

(b) whether Government have issued an ordinance in this regard; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE [DR. (SHRIMATI) RITA VERMA]: (a) to (c) The Government have amended Prevention of Food Adulteration (PFA) Rules 1955 *vide* Notification No. GSR 537(E) dated 13-6-2000, which will come into force w.e.f. 1st September, 2000 whereby the date upto which the product is best for consumption shall be mentioned on label of all packages of food, except packages containing confectionery weighing 20 gm or less. In the case of Aspartame, Infant Milk Substitute and Infant food also this requirement will

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.